



Indiana
Department of Education

Region 8

Outreach Division of
School Improvement

February

2015

In this issue

Effective Instruction Page 1

Instructional Days and
Time Requirement Page 2

ECA Assessment Page 2
Updates

Acuity Updates Page 2

Ensuring Leadership—
Priority Schools Page 3

Math Instruction Info. Page
3 & 4

New Accountability Page 5
Model Input

Indiana Promise Page 6

Other resources and
materials Pages
6-8

Effective Instruction

The focus of this article for this month is [Turnaround Principle 3 –Effective Instruction](#). Turnaround Principles are not only used as a strategic system to support schools that may be struggling, but more importantly the eight principles are indicators for high performing schools. When discussing [Turnaround Principle 3](#) it is important to emphasize that there are many components that come together to create an environment of high quality effective best practices that develop into effective instruction. These components are outlined in the following reading.

Learning Objectives Learning objectives must be posted and referred to within the lesson. These set the tone for students of what students are learning, the purpose, and how it applies to their life. The learning objective must be clear and measureable. It is essential that these objectives are aligned to the curriculum, Indiana Academic standards, and also align to the assessments that the student will be given.

Instructional Strategies It is important to implement instructional strategies that require active engagement. Effective instruction demands the use of a variety of instructional and response strategies to meet the needs of multiple learning styles. It is also important for teachers to utilize student learning data from formal and informal assessments to intentionally select these strategies to maximize student engagement and growth.

Checking for Understanding Checks for understanding (CFUs) are often neglected as an essential point within a lesson to help gauge student understanding or learning to help inform, monitor, and adjust instruction. Data from CFUs can and should be utilized to select instructional strategies and develop student groupings. When implemented effectively most students will master the objectives on first instruction and those that do not should be given further support. Administrators should monitor the use of CFUs during informal walk-throughs and formal observations.

Content Knowledge It is important that all teachers are highly qualified in the area to be taught and have the necessary content knowledge to support effective instruction. Lessons need to be relevant rich with relevant standards-based content. The teacher is effective in approaching the content from multiple angles to support all learning styles. Also in effective classrooms students are highly engaged and are asking relevant questions that are addressed by the teacher or other students.

Use of Data Effective teachers have the skills to utilize multiple measures of data which include diagnostic, formative, and summative data to differentiate and improve student achievement. It is important to establish a culture that data is reviewed in every teacher meeting to allow the staff to collaborate as a team to meet the needs of students. The use of data from CFUs and evidence from student learning can be utilized to re-teach and spiral as needed. It is essential that data is reviewed in a systematic way to identify students that are not mastering the basic skills so that they can be given diagnostic assessment to target their learning needs.

High Expectations In effective schools and classrooms, teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally. These educators believe that all students can achieve to the highest potential when provided high quality rigorous instruction. It is important that depth of knowledge and high level questioning are utilized in instruction as required with the new standards as well as the upcoming state assessment. High expectations are also established in not allowing students to give up or not respond when the work is viewed as too hard. Academic progress is monitored through discussion of student data with the leadership team. The leadership team is then able to provide support to classroom teachers and students that have exhibited the greatest need. Also in effective schools, classroom behavior is consistent throughout the school. Students are taught the skills of self-discipline and self-management.

This article is available [here](#) in its entirety to access separate from this newsletter.

I am also here to support schools in this area as well as in other school improvement efforts. Please contact me if I can assist in anyway.

Doug Thieme-Outreach Coordinator

Cellphone: 317-518-2571

dthieme@doe.in.gov

Twitter: @IDOEOutreach8

ESEA Flexibility Waiver

This allows Indiana to be exempt from certain aspects of the federal No Child Left Behind law. It also gives local schools flexibility in how they utilize federal funding and allow more of these decisions to be made at the local level. Indiana is process of applying for an extension of the waiver through the 2017-18 school year. We must submit the application by March 31, 2015. Public comment can be submitted [here](#).

Indiana Department of Education- Director of Family and Community Engagement

The IDOE Family and Community Engagement initiative has rolled out last month. The vision of the FACE Initiative is to assist the Division of School Improvement with an intentional approach to family and community engagement. Our mission is to serve all Indiana schools, including Focus and Priority Schools, with improving their family and community engagement initiatives. In addition to identifying and designating applicable schools as “Family Friendly,” we will create and share a statewide framework for Family and Community Engagement. If you have any questions or in need of additional support in the area of Family and Community Engagement, please contact:

Leroy Robinson

Director of Family and Community Engagement

Indiana Department of Education

South Tower, Suite 600

115 West Washington Street

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: 317-234-5663

lrobinson@doe.in.gov



ECA Blueprints and Instructional/ Assessment Guidance

Several weeks ago the ECA Blueprints and Instructional and Assessment Guidance documents for the Spring 2015 accountability ECA assessments were posted on the following web page: <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/end-course-assessments-ecas>. Please check this page as more resources have been posted. The new resources consists of videos, Power Point presentations, item samplers, and many other valuable resources. Do not forget about the Experience CCRA for the ECA assessment. Student can use this to prepare for the assessment by being exposed to the technology enhanced questions. This can be accessed at <http://in.questarai.com/ccra/> It is highly recommended that teachers integrate this into their weekly classroom instruction.

Accommodations and Tools for Indiana Statewide Testing for 2014-15

The Office of Student Assessment has posted a video entitled ‘Accommodations and Tools for IN Statewide Testing for the 2014-15 School Year’: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXGncS7L1q0>. This video reviews many accommodations. Some of the topics include: Read Aloud (screen reader vs. human reader), Reference Sheets, Experience College and Career Ready Assessments (CCRA) online, FAQ, Things To Consider and Resources. Please take a minute to watch this important video. **I cannot stress enough how important it is that you take a few minutes to view this video to be informed of assessment information that you need to know for all students.**

Acuity Update— Readiness 3 and Algebra I ECA for Grade 8 and below

Flexibility regarding the administration of **Acuity Readiness 3** is being provided so that schools may use the tool instructionally. The purpose of Acuity Readiness 3 is to provide access to rigorous items aligned to college- and career-ready Indiana Academic Standards in addition to enabling teachers to monitor student progress in terms of learning the new standards and to identify students in need of intervention.

Administration Flexibility provided:

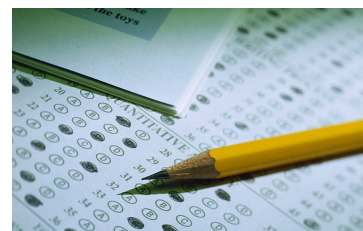
- May use items instructionally, rather than as a formative “test”
- May print items and use as instructional activities
- Any school staff member may “administer” or discuss items with students
- Example: Middle school Math teacher may want to use math items

Ethical Practices and Test Security to keep in mind:

- Keep documents in the classroom; do not send the materials home
- Make it clear to students that these activities are for practice, and on the actual test, students will need to work on their own to “show what they know”

Important Notes: CTB Acuity staff are creating a “guide” to assist Acuity users with this flexibility. Information regarding the guide will be disseminated to Acuity users by CTB.

Schools choosing not to administer the Algebra I ECA to students in grade 8 and below are welcome to substitute the Acuity Readiness 3 assessment for the Algebra I Predictive C assessment (as long as the site signed-up to use the Acuity Readiness assessments).



SUPERINTENDENTS-PRIORITY SCHOOLS ENSURING LEADERSHIP REMINDER

Each priority school is required to submit leadership accountability assurance documents, including the attached District Response Form. Please read the [Ensuring Leadership Memo](#). These documents are due to your Outreach Coordinator no later than February 28, 2015 from the district Superintendent. All documents for the process can be found at this [location](#). Please submit the documents that apply to your priority Principal.

****Please note this needs to be completed for all priority school principals even if the school has recently earned an accountability grade of B or C. This does not apply to those priority school principals whose school has earned an A with the most recent accountability grade.**

For principals in year 1 or 2 (has not completed beyond 2nd year in priority school)

- Submit [District Response Page](#)
- Submit the [Year 1 or Year 2 Principal Assurance Letter](#) signed by the district Superintendent
 - ◊ Proper evidence/data demonstrating a past track record of success
 - ◊ Evidence that the principal can lead the turnaround effort & effectively implement the 8 turnaround principles
- Submit the Priority Principal Resume (current)

For principals in year 3 or more (completed 2nd year and is currently in 3rd year)

- Submit the [District Response Page](#)
- Submit the [Ensuring Strong Leadership form](#)
 - ◊ supporting documentation & historical data to show improvement in student achievement.
- Submit Principal Leadership Rubric with Superintendent verification ([Word](#)) ([PDF](#))
 - ◊ provide sources of evidence
- Submit [Removal and Replacement Letter](#), if necessary

All documentation and evidence must be submitted via email, thumb drive, CD, or original paperwork to your Outreach Coordinator no later than **February 28, 2015**. If you have any questions regarding this process, please don't hesitate to contact me at dthieme@doe.in.gov or please call me at 317-518-2517.

Math Instruction, Expanding Constructed Response and Extended Response Resources

Below are the major highlight points for Teachers and their focus for Math and their Math Instruction. Teachers need to know what are productive and unproductive beliefs around Teaching and Learning Mathematics. The beliefs are a continuum where unproductive is the starting point and in a perfect utopia we would all get to and consistently be teaching with the productive beliefs. (See this document-[Beliefs for Teaching and Learning Math](#)) This information is from the new NCTM Book – Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All which can be purchased at: <http://www.nctm.org/store/Products/%28eBook%29-Principles-to-Actions-%28PDF-Downloads%29/>

Teachers need to be using and incorporating the Mathematical Process Standards into every lesson. At the bare minimum they should be using Mathematics Process Standards 1 and 6 in every lesson. The other Mathematical Process Standards should be used and incorporated appropriately based on the lesson that is being done that day. (See this document – [Process Standards](#)) Teachers can post the Mathematical Process Standards Posters in their classrooms for their students to see and to remind them to use and incorporate the Mathematical Process Standards into every lesson. (See this document – [IAS 2014 Mathematical Process Standards Hybrid](#)) Both Teachers and Administrators can use the Mathematical Process Standards “Look Fors” created by Dr. Skip Fennell to check that it is obvious and noticeable that the Mathematical Process Standards are being used and incorporated into every lesson. (See this document – [Student Teacher Look Fors](#))

Finally, Teachers need to be incorporating the “Part B” questions into their checking for understanding, quizzes and tests with their students. “Part B” questions take a Gathering Information – DOK Level 1 question and asks the students to look at the problem in a different way so that the students are aware of how the problem and solution are constructed. These are known as Productive Questions to force students to see the structure of the mathematics and to see problems from a different point of view. This should help students make connections between the various topics that have been discussed in the class and not just focus only on the skill being presented. Here are a few examples:

Add $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{2}{3}$

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Math Instruction Continued

Part B Write your solution in 5 different ways without using the numbers in your solution.

Insert the correct symbol $<$, $>$, $=$ into $\frac{7}{13}$ $\frac{8}{15}$

Part B What are two ways to know which symbols can be placed in the problem to make it correct.

Using only whole numbers with no decimals or fractions, how many different rectangles have an area of 96 square inches.

Part B All solutions are _____ of the area

(See these documents - [Purposeful Questions and DOK Levels](#), [DOK Question Stems](#) and [Cognitive Rigor Matrix Math/Science](#))

More Extended Response and Constructed Response questions are needed for students. Here are places you can find these resources for all levels.

Over time there will be more extended response and constructed response questions released on the Assessment Webpage. You can keep checking under the Item Sampler area at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/end-course-assessments-ecas> and <http://in.questarai.com/ccra/>. In the mean-time there are prior year's released items that you might be able to use at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment/istep-released-items-and-scoring-notes> also use the DOK Material attached and on the PowerPoint at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/assessment/depth-knowledge-powerpoint-algebra-i.pdf>

You can also Google "Constructed Response Math Questions" and find some great resources like:

https://www4.uwm.edu/Org/mmp/_resources/CR_Items.htm

http://mdk12.org/assessments/k_8/items/cr_grade5_math.html

<http://mcsed.net/Page/268>

<http://www.pinterest.com/abigaillp/constructed-response/>

<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/teacher-support-toolbox-library/6-8-grade-math-teachers>

You can refine or narrow your search criteria using a specific grade level or mathematical concept and/or standard. These are great practice on this type of question. They may not be the exact same as the questions your students will be seeing on the ISTEP+ or ECA tests, but the practice with these types of questions will help them considerably with the questions they will see and be asked to work on the Indiana ISTEP+ and ECA Assessments.

Likewise if you Google "Extended Response Math Questions" and find some great resources like:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/Mathematics/ReleasedItems.aspx>

<http://www.riroe.com/site/nims/problem-solving-and-extended-response/>

<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/k-12-math-year-long-planning>

<http://www.pinterest.com/malyons14/extended-response/>

http://www.isbe.net/assessment/htmls/math_released_er.htm

If teachers are working on these key aspects of their instruction they will be moving towards the best math instruction they can possibly be doing for their students.

PD Opportunity— Five-Star Academy Provides Seats in Online Courses

The Office of eLearning's strategic partnership with Five-Star Academy means every Indiana school district is entitled to four (4) seats in Five-Star's facilitated online courses. The eight-week online courses cover cutting-edge strategies to assist teachers, instructional technology coaches, administrators, and curriculum directors' ways to integrate technology in schools. Participants receive 40 Professional Growth Points (PGPs) upon the completion of each course. Get course details at: <http://www.five-startech.com/online-course-registration-other> Discuss with your district personnel if interested in this opportunity.

Accountability Model Input

Accountability Model Input Opportunity, The State Board of Education approved initial rule language for A-F Accountability on January 7, 2015. The rule language will now be presented to stakeholders through public hearings and website display to allow for public comment. Public hearings are scheduled as follows:

- February 25, 2015, at 9:00 a.m., at the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, Administrative Building, Board Room, 951 Walnut Street, Evansville, Indiana, 47713
- February 26, 2015, at 9:00 a.m., at Marion High School, Board Room #4-4, 750 West 26th Street, Marion, Indiana, 46953
- February 27, 2015, at 9:00 a.m., at the Indiana Government Center South Building, Conference Room C, 302 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204.

Public comments may be submitted to the Board until close of business on March 13, 2015. More details on model can be found [here](#).

ESEA Flexibility Waiver— Renewal Open for Public Comment/Feedback

U.S. Department of Education announced to states with an approved ESEA Flexibility Waiver that they can request a three-year renewal to extend their ESEA Flexibility Waiver through the 2017-2018 school year. States will have until March 31, 2015 to submit their extension request to the U.S. Department of Education. The Indiana Department of Education will be working with stakeholders as we move forward towards the submission of Indiana's extension.

A copy of the waiver application can be found [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact Federal Relations Director Jeff Coyne at jcoyne@doe.in.gov.

The renewal draft is available for viewing and open for feedback at this [location](#).



Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching

The **Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)** is the highest honor bestowed by the United States government specifically for K-12 mathematics and science teaching.

Anyone--principals, teachers, parents, students, or members of the general public--may nominate exceptional mathematics or science (including computer science) teachers who are currently teaching grades 7-12 for the 2014-2015 award year. Teachers may also apply directly at www.paemst.org.

The **Nomination Deadline is April 1, 2015**. This date gives the nominated teacher time to prepare an application prior to the application deadline. The **Application Deadline is May 1, 2015**, for secondary school teachers (grades 7-12). Elementary school teachers (grades K-6) are eligible to apply during the 2015-2016 program year.

Follow the Reader— Big Goal Collaborative Third Grade Reading Team



Big Goal Collaborative's 3rd Grade Reading Team has developed a tool for increasing our region's literacy. Based on Project READS' curricula to train mentors and parents, Follow the Reader is a highly engaging, highly interactive series of 5 online programs. This Northeast Indiana Original is now available FREE to mentors, tutors, childcare providers, parents, and anyone else within the 10-county region of Northeast Indiana represented by the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and the Big Goal Collaborative. The online programs can be accessed through the Project READS website:

<http://abouteducation.org/>

Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral

Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR) announces **The Child Care Search** button, a free service that directs users to www.childcareindiana.org and allows your school to partner with the Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR) and local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to help families find high quality child care and out-of-school time options. **Adding the Child Care Search button to your school website is easy and FREE!** For more information, visit www.iaccrr.org and click on 'Link to Us'. For questions, contact the Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral at data-help@iaccrr.org.



Promise Indiana— A COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS INITIATIVE

Request for Applications: Promise Indiana Pilot Program 2015-16

Promise Indiana is a community-driven framework for helping youth increase hope and build the assets they need to pursue education beyond high school. With support from the Indiana Education Savings Authority, four Indiana communities are currently piloting Promise Indiana, and the initiative will expand to include additional communities during the 2015-16 school year.



Business, education, local government, and non-profit sectors each have a part to play in increasing educational attainment in your community by creating a college-going culture and helping youth establish college and career identity. Students with a dedicated college savings account in their name are seven times more likely to attend college; account ownership is a key piece of identity-building for youth at every stage of the educational pipeline. The Promise helps communities leverage support for families to begin saving for higher education and for youth to begin college and career discovery.

The Promise Indiana pilot is a unique opportunity to be one of the first communities in the state to receive operational support to launch the initiative and create meaningful outcomes for youth and families. Follow the link below to learn more about the Promise Indiana model and how your community can become one of the pilots selected for the 2015-2016 school year.

Promise Indiana Pilot Application: <http://bit.ly/PromiseIndiana>

Applications must be submitted online by March 9, 2015 (11:59 pm EST).

If you have further questions about Promise Indiana or require technical assistance with the online application please contact:

Amanda Jones-Layman
VP of Academic Engagement
Wabash County YMCA
ajones-layman@wabashcountyyymca.org
260-563-9622, ext. 406

Ordering of Diploma Seals and Letters

Each year, Indiana high schools are asked to submit the total number of students who are expected to graduate with a Core 40, Core 40 with Academic Honors and Core 40 with Technical Honors Diploma. The Indiana Department of Education uses this information to provide diploma seals and congratulatory letters to schools for each recipient. Submit your school's number of graduates online [Online Order Form](#) by Friday, March 27, 2015. Please direct questions to Audra Hacker at ahacker@doe.in.gov or 317-232-9111 ([see memorandum](#))

Assessment Calendar and Updates 2014-2015

January 21– February 27– WIDA ACCESS Annual Assessment

January 22– April 1– ACCUPLACER

January 26– March 6– National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Grades 4, 8, & 12–

Online or Paper/Pencil Math, Reading, and Science

February 9– March 6– ECAs (Late Winter)

February 25– March 13– ISTEP+ Part 1– Paper/pencil (Applied Skills)

March 1– April 30– ISTAR (Science and Social Studies)

March 2– March 20– ISTEP+ Part 1– Online (Applied Skills)

March 12– March 18– IREAD3 (Spring)

March 30– May 29– National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Grades 4, 8, & 12–

Paper/Pencil Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

March 30– May 15– NCSC Assessment (English/Language Arts and Mathematics)

April 20– June 3– ECAs (Spring)

April 27– May 8– ISTEP+ Part 2– Paper/pencil (Pre-approval required) (Multiple-Choice & Technology-Enhanced Items)

April 27– May 15– ISTEP+ Part 2– Online (Multiple-Choice & Technology-Enhanced Items)

June 1– July 24– IREAD3 (Summer)- Online

June 8– July 24– IREAD3 (Summer) Paper/pencil (as needed)

June 18– July 30– ECAs (Summer)

Outreach Division of School Improvement

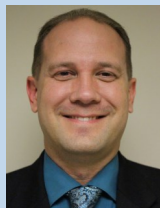
Cell: 317-518-2571

Email: dthieme@doe.in.gov

Website: <http://www.doe.in.gov/outreach>

Regional Website:

<http://www.doe.in.gov/outreach/regional-information-region-8>



Doug Thieme
Outreach Coordinator

IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES. MAKING THEM HAPPEN.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can support your work in any way at the district and school level. I am here to assist in any way.

Please pass this newsletter on to your principals, teachers, and other school/district personnel that would benefit from the information it provides. All of my previous newsletters are now archived on my regional website. The link can be found to the left. I will also be adding more resources in time.









I am continually adding individuals that would like to be added to the newsletter email so that they can receive it directly. If you are one of those individuals please email me to request that your name is added to the list of recipients.

The following remaining two pages contain Professional Development opportunities that are being offered by the Region 8 Education Service Center. PLEASE visit to see the QUALITY sessions that they are providing. They are always looking to add to their agenda and PD calendar. Please let them know of the needs of your district and school.

The last page contains resources that your principals and teachers might find beneficial to improving instruction and their lessons. Please take a look. If you find resources that are useful that schools would find beneficial please let me know.

Professional Development Opportunities and Resources

Region 8 Education Service Center PD Opportunities

 Helping Students Develop Argumentation Writing Skills: ELA 6-12	2/27/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Region 8 ESC
 The Health of our Youth in Adams County	2/25/2015	12:00PM-1:00PM	Region 8 ESC
 Helping Students Meet the IN Science/ Technical Subjects Literacy Standards: 6-12	3/13/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Huntington Community Schools
 Helping Students Meet the Social Studies Literacy Standards 6-12	3/12/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Huntington Community Schools
 A Toolbox of Instructional Strategies K-12: Checking for Understanding	4/22/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Region 8 Education Service Center
 Advancing Differentiation: 6-12	4/16/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Region 8 Education Service Center
 Advancing Differentiation: K-5	4/15/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Region 8 Education Service Center
 Motivating Disengaged, Disruptive, Hard to Reach Students: K-12	4/13/2015	9:00AM-3:30PM	Region 8 Education Service Center

Professional Development Opportunities and Resources

Resources

Differentiated Instruction Resources

<http://differentiationcentral.com>

<http://www.differentiatedresources.com/>

<http://www.ericdigests.org/1996-3/mixed.htm>

<http://www.readwritethink.org/professional-development/strategy-guides/differentiating-reading-experience-students-30103.html#strategy-practice>

Guided Math Instruction:

<http://www.illustrativemathematics.org/>

<http://www.k-5mathteachingresources.com/>

www.insidemathematics.org

www.learnzillion.com – for both math and ELA

Content Literacy for College and Career Readiness:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/blueprint/faq/college-career.pdf>

<http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/ccr>

http://www.wested.org/area_of_work/college-career/

<http://www.readworks.org/>

The National Education Association recently posted 3,000 online lessons, representing the work of more than 100 "master teachers" who translated the College and Career Ready math and language arts standards into classroom activities for every grade. The instructors share classroom videos, samples of student work and candid evaluations of resources they've tested. The project, a joint venture with ed-tech startup BetterLessons, is funded by the NEA and the Gates Foundation. Organizers hope to have 16,000 model lessons posted by the fall of 2015.

<http://cc.betterlesson.com/>

Scaffolding Lesson Strategies:

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/scaffolding-lessons-six-strategies-rebecca-alber>

Literacy Resources:

Reading Resources Network

This teacher site by Scholastic has a wealth of information about how to support students to become better readers. The emphasis is on early elementary. The subsection Strategies for Building Success in Your Classroom is the most important for the social studies teacher with its emphasis on nonfiction, classroom libraries, and guided reading.

Graphic Organizers for Reading

This set of thirty graphic organizers has suggested applications to analyzing, brainstorming, comparing, evaluating, hypothesizing, interacting sequencing and visualizing information.

Content Area Literacy

Here are fourteen strategies for teaching students to improve their reading of history-social science material. Each has an indication of when in the lesson the strategy is appropriate and instructions for applying it in the classroom.

Using Readers Theatre

Readers Theatre is a presentation of text that is expressively and dramatically read aloud by two or more readers. Although there may be some staging or costumes, the emphasis is on reading! English Learners benefit immeasurably because they have the opportunity to practice a text several times as they prepare a performance.

Exploring How Section Headings Support Understanding of Expository Texts

This lesson supports third- through fifth-grade students' exploration and understanding of the purposes for section headings in expository texts. Resources are provided for the teacher to select texts that are appropriate to the students' reading level, interests, and curriculum. The lesson requires students to work together to explore their understanding of section headings and solve problems presented to them. For extension activities, students can write their own expository text using three to five section headings and apply the strategy to the outline format.

Choosing, Chatting, and Collecting: Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy

The vocabulary self-collection strategy involves having students choose the words they want to learn, chat about their rationale for selecting words, and agree upon words for a classroom collection. This strategy is an effective approach to helping students understand the meanings of new words, use them in conversations and writing, and make personal connections with words while reading. The strategy also encourages students to use the words for authentic tasks and on a regular basis in their writing. In this lesson, an online Shakespeare text is used as an example. The strategy can be applied to any content area reading.

Building Reading Comprehension Through Think-Alouds

Studies have shown that the think-aloud strategy improves reading comprehension on tests. Through this lesson, the teacher will model the think-aloud strategy for students. Components of think-alouds will be introduced, as well as type of text interactions. Students will develop the ability to use think-alouds to aid in reading comprehension tasks.

Literacy and Learning: Content Literacy Strategies

Here are over 32 strategies for improving comprehension that can be applied to history-social science content reading. Each strategy is described on a separate, downloadable pdf page

Reading Strategies for the Social Studies Classroom

This Holt, Reinhart and Winston site offers U.S. and World History examples of 10 reading strategies by Judith Irvin. They include previewing text, understanding text, graphic organizers, visualizing, building background knowledge, constructing concepts, making predictions, activating prior knowledge, anticipating information, and developing vocabulary.

Be a Reading Detective: Finding Similarities and Differences in Ideas

This lesson provides a compare and contrast strategy technique for nonfiction writing. First, students are introduced to the terms compare and contrast, and asked to find similarities and differences between two common items. Next, students reference an article practice evaluating text by comparing and contrasting. A Reader's Tool Kit handout guides students to identify ways in which an author relates ideas and relationships. Students are then introduced to Venn diagrams as tools that demonstrate similarities and differences. To show that they understand compare and contrast, students independently apply the techniques they learned to curriculum-based materials and present their findings to the class.

An Exploration of Text Sets: Supporting All Readers

The lesson supports readers of a range of abilities and experience through the use of text sets. A text set is a collection that focuses on one concept or topic and includes multiple genres such as books, charts and maps, informational pamphlets, poetry and songs, photographs, non-fiction books, almanacs or encyclopedias. In this lesson, the class community will put together a collection of text sets on topics of keen interest. They will then explore these texts using three key reading strategies: (1) graffiti boards, (2) browsing for key information, and (3) uninterrupted reading/focused free writing.

Acquiring New Vocabulary Through Book Discussion Groups

This lesson explores various ways in which to foster students' vocabulary skills through direct instruction and small-group discussions. While reading the text *Pink and Say* by Patricia Polacco, students identify words that are unfamiliar to them. Working collaboratively in small groups, they discuss the meaning of these new words using context clues from the text, prior knowledge, and print and online resources. They then apply their knowledge of the new vocabulary to further their understanding of the text. This particular lesson can be modified and reused for other areas of the curriculum, with moderate preparation and researching of topic-related resources.

Extensions are included to further expand vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension.